(c) whether it is also a fact that in many countries residences have been bought but no one has occupied them and his Ministry has itself admitted that there are irregularities in the system;

(d) if so, how the system is being made waterproof; and

(e) what immediate steps are being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No. The expenditure in Indian Missions abroad is regulated in accordance with prescribed rules and regulations of the Government of India, and special requirements, if any.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

Confrontation in United Nations on Iraq issue

2391. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the state has been set for an all-out confrontation in the United Nations, with the France keen on taking on Britain and the United States over the ongoing crisis in Iraq;

(b) if so, whether France has circulated specific proposals that would address the issue of disarmament in Iraq in a peaceful manner;

(c) whether India has also examined the proposal; and

(d) if so, to what extent India is fully supporting the French plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) Issues relating to Iraq are currently under discussion in the UN Security Council. Alternative and divergent approaches have emerged, and are being considered by the members of the Security Council.

(c) and (d) India is vitally interested in the peace and prosperity of the Gulf region and has, therefore, consistently called for the resolution of the crisis relating to Iraq through political and diplomatic means under

the auspices of the UN. India recognizes the validity of the unanimous decision of the UN Security Council in its Resolution 1441 that provides for the disarmament of Iraq. Iraq has to faithfully comply with the provisions of the relevant UN Security Coucil Resolutions. The work of the inspectors is continuing in Iraq. and UNMOVIC and IAEA have submitted reports to the Security Council, which is required to decide on what action needs to be taken. In India's view every effort must be made to find a peaceful resolution to the issue.

Hindi and Culture Officers in Indian High Commissions

2392. SHRI BASHISTHA NARAIN SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of posts of Hindi and Cultural officers in the offices of Indian High Commissions abroad and the duties they have to perform;

(b) the number of posts lying vacant out of the above and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government for appointments on the said posts at the earliest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) There are 6 (six) posts of Hindi and Culture officers, one each in Indian High Commissions/ Embassies in Port Louis, Port of Spain, Suva, London, Paramaribo and Kathmandu. The duties performed by these officers include implementation of Official Language Policy of the Government of India, constitution of Official Language Committee and organization of its meetings periodically in the Embassy, liaison with and assist local bodies propagating Hindi, organising Hindi week/month in the Embassy, translation of treaties, agreements, contracts and other official documents, conducting Hindi examinations in the Mission and propagation of India's cultural heritage through talks in educational institutions and cultural associations.

(b) None.

(c) Does not arise.